

Message Text

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ACTION IO-13

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 EUR-12 ISO-00 AID-05 EB-07 DIWY-01 PA-01

PRS-01 USIA-06 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 CU-02 OES-06

L-03 TRSE-00 COME-00 /071 W
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R 281120Z APR 76

FM AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9128

INFO AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN

AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN

AMEMBASSY PARAMARIBO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

AMCONSUL CURACAO

AMCONSUL MONTREAL

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

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MONTREAL FOR ICAO, PARIS FOR UNESCO, ROME FOR FODAG

VIENNA FOR IAEA AND UNIDO

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TAGS: UNDP, EAID, TD

SUBJECT: CERP 0008 - EVALUATION OF UN ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

REF: STATE 72386

BEGIN SUMMARY

OVERALL ADMINISTRATION OF UN-SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS IN
TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO HAS BEEN SOMEWHAT DISRUPTED BY CHANGE
OF RESREP AND DEPARTURE OF ASSISTANT RESREP WHO RAN TRINIDAD
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UNDP PROGRAM FOR PAST FIVE YEARS. LATTER HAS BEEN REPLACED,

BUT ONLY ON A TRANSITORY BASIS. DESPITE THESE FACTORS, PACE OF UNDP PROGRAM HAS NOT FALTERED AND NEARLY ALL MAJOR PROJECTS PLANNED IN 1974-78 COUNTRY PORGRAM HAVE NOW BEEN LAUNCHED, ALTHOUGH SOME MANY MONTHS BEHIND SCHEDULE. UNDP PROJECTS IN TRINIDAD ARE ADEQUATELY FUNDED UP TO THE PRESENT, BUT UN WILL SEEK \$1 MILLION EXTRA FROM GOVERNMENT OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO IF ALL PROJECTS ARE TO BE CONTINUED AS PLANNED THROUGH 1977. AS FAR AS EMBASSY CAN DETERMINE, RESPONSIBILITY FOR MAJOR SHORTCOMINGS IN IMPLEMENTATION OF UNDP PROJECTS LIES WITH TRINIDAD GOVERNMENT WHICH HAS SOMETIMES DELAYED IN PROVIDING COUNTERPART FACILITIES, FAILED TO PROVIDE SUFFICIENT AND ABLE HIGH-LEVEL COUNTERPART PERSONNEL, OR SEEMED SIMPLY TO LOSE INTEREST IN SOME PROJECTS. PROSPECT OF UNDP SEEKING SUBSTANTIAL ADDITIONAL FUNDING FROM HOST GOVERNMENT TO CARRY OUT ALREADY AGREED-UPON PROJECTS SHOULD PROVIDE THE ACID TEST OF TRINIDAD'S COMMITMENT TO UN-SYSTEM TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE. END SUMMARY.

1. FOLLOWING PARAGRAPHS ARE KEYED TO LETTERED PARAGRAPHS REFTEL:

(A) RECENTLY -ARRIVED UNDP RESREP APPEARS TO BE A QUALIFIED PROFESSIONAL AND CLEARLY HAS ASSUMED LEADERSHIP ROLE IN UN ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED IN OR FROM TRINIDAD (HER REGION INCLUDES TRINIDAD, BARBADOS, SURINAM, AND THE NETHERLANDS ANTILLES). ALTHOUGH IT MAY BE TOO SOON TO JUDGE HER EFFECTIVENESS IN WORKING WITH TRINIDAD GOVERNMENT, EMBASSY HAS HEARD A GOOD DEAL OF CRITICISM TO EFFECT THAT NEW RESREP'S PERSONAL RELATIONS WITH TRINIDADIAN ARE NOT GOOD. DAY-TO-DAY ADMINISTRATION OF UNDP PROGRAM IN TRINIDAD IS RESPONSIBILITY OF AN ASSISTANT RESREP. THE CURRENT INCUMBENT IN THIS POSITION HAS HELD IT ONLY SINCE LATE 1975 AND IS MOMENTARILY EXPECTING A TRANSFER TO UN OFFICE IN GUYANA; THIS HE DISPLAYS LITTLE IN-DEPTH KNOWLEDGE OF UNDP PROGRAM IN TRINIDAD. UNDP ACTIVITIES ARE REASONABLY WELL COORDINATED WITH THOSE OF IBRD BY SIMPLE MECHANISE OF LEAVING CERTAIN SECTORS OF THE ECONOMY ENTIRELY TO INTERNATIONAL LENDING INSTITUTIONS.

(B) COORDINATION OF EXTERNAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE IS HAPHAZARD AND CHAOTIC, LARGELY DUE TO LACK OF ANY POWERFUL CENTRAL PLANNING OR DEVELOPMENT AGENCY IN TRINIDAD GOVERNMENT. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TRINIDAD'S LAST DEVELOPMENT PLAN WAS WRITTEN IN 1968 FOR THE 1969-73 PERIOD AND NEVER REALLY IMPLEMENTED; LAST YEAR, THE WEAK MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT WAS ABOLISHED AND ITS SMALL STAFF ATTACHED TO THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE. THE GOVERNMENT HAS ESTABLISHED A TASK FORCE TO COORDINATE THE COUNTRY'S INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT, BUT THIS GROUP SEEMS TO HAVE PAID LITTLE ATTENTION TO TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE COORDINATION AS YET. GIVEN THIS SITUATION, THE UNDP OFFICE ATTEMPTS

TO PERFORM A COORDINATING ROLE, BUT IS OFTEN THWARTED BY

DTER-MINISTERIAL COMPETITION AND THE GOVERNMENT'S HABIT
OF "SHOPPING AROUND" FOR TECHNICAL AID.

(C) UNDP PROGRAMS IN TRINIDAD APPEAR NOT TO HAVE SUFFERED
FROM AUSTERITY MEASURES ADOPTED IN LATE 1975, LARGELY DUE
TO FACT THAT TRINIDAD'S COUNTRY PROGRAM WAS NOT PREPARED
UNTIL LATE IN THE 1971-76 CYCLE. AS A RESULT, EXPENDITURE
IN THE FIRST YEARS WAS WELL UNDER THE INDICATIVE PLANNING
FIGURE, LEAVING AN ADEQUATE AMOUNT AVAILABLE FOR 1975 AND
1976. IMPACT ON FIRST YEAR OF NEXT CYCLE, HOWEVER, IS
LIKELY TO BE QUITE DRASTIC: ME LOCAL UNDP OFFICE HAS BEEN
TOLD THAT IT "MIGHT" HAVE ABOUT \$745,000, WHEREAS IT ESTIMATES
ABOUT \$1.9 MILLION IS NEEDED TO CARRY OUT ALL PROJECTS NOW
APPROVED OR UNDERWAY. THIS SHOULD PROVIDE A CRUCIAL TEST
OF TRINIDAD GOVERNMENT' FELT NEED FOR UN-SYSTEM TECHNICAL
ASSISTANCE, SINCE LOCAL OFFICE PLANS TO DESCRIBE AUSTERITY
SITUATION TO GOVERNMENT AND INVITE IT: 1) TO SHARE THE COSTS
(OVER AND ABOVE AGREED-UPON COUNTERPART LEVELS) OF ALL UN
PROJECTS IN TRINIDAD; 2) TO TAKE OVER SOME OF THE MAJOR
PROJECTS (SUCH AS THE INDUSTRIAL TECHNOLOGY INSTITUTE OR
THE TOOL AND DIE PROJECT) ; OR 3) TO DETERMINE WHICH OF THE
PROJECTS SHOULD BE DISCONTINUED IF UNDP IS TO STAY WITHIN
ITS 1977 PLANNING FIGURE.

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(D) THE COUNTRY PROGRAM FOR TRINIDAD WAS ORIGINALLY DRAWN UP FOR THE 1974-78 TIME FRAME, AND THERE ARE NO PLANS TO PREPARE A NEW ONE FOR THE 1977-81 CYIXE. INSTEAD, THE UNDP OFFICE PLANS TO RELY UPON THE ANNUAL REVIEWS TO UP-DATE THE COUNTRY PROGRAM. ONLY ONE ANNUAL REVIEW HAS THUS FAR BEEN HELD (IN MID-QOUT) BEFORE THE PRESENT ASSISTANT RESREP ASSUMED THAT JOB, AND HE IS LIKELY TO BE TRANSFERRED BEFORE THE NEXT REVIEW IS SCHEDULED. IN ANY EVENT, THE UNDP OFFICE IS NOT SANGUINE ABOUT THE UTILITY OF CONTINUING COUNTRY REVIEWS IF UNDP PROGRAMS SHOULD BE DRASTICALLY REDUCED IN TRINIDAD, EITHER THROUGH THEIR ASSUMPTION BY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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GOVERNMENT OR AUSTERITY-INDUCED CANCELLATION. BASED UPON THE EMBASSY'S KNOWLEDGE OF THE UNDP PROJECTS REVIEWED LAST YEAR, THE CONCLUSIONS OF THE FIRST COUNTRY REVIEW SEEM TO BE SUPERFICIAL AND NOT ORIENTED TOWARD SOLVING THOSE PROBLEMS IDENTIFIED BY THE REVIEW. (TO BE SURE, MOST OF THE IDENTIFIED SHORTCOMINGS ARE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE TRINIDAD GOVERNMENT-- DELAYS IN PROVIDING COUNTERPART FACILITIES, LACK OF ADEQUATE COUNTERPART PERSONNEL, ETC -- AND THE REVIEW TEAM PROBABLY FELT IT DID ITS BEST IN DRAWING ATTENTION TO THESE CRITICAL AREAS).

(E) THE EMBASSY IS NOT AWARE OF THE RESULTS OF ANY OF THE TRIPARTITE PROJECT REVIEWS, BUT WE SUSPECT THEY ARE NO MORE EFFECTIVE THAN THE ANNUAL REVIEW DESCRIBED ABOVE. IN THE PAST, SEVERAL PROJECTS WERE WEAKENED BY DELAYS IN RECRUITING EXPERT PERSONNEL BY THE UN EXECUTING AGENCIES; IN ALL CASES, HOWEVER, NEEDED PERSONNEL HAVE NOW BEEN SECURED. WE KNOW OF NO PROJECTS WHICH HAVE BEEN DROPPED, BUT THIS IS A CLEAR POSSIBILITY WHEN UNDP INFORMS THE TRINIDAD GOVERNMENT OF FINANCIAL CONSTRAINTS FOR THE COMING YEARS. THE UNDP OFFICE CONSIDERS THE FOLLOWING TO BE ITS STRONGEST PROJECTS IN TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO KAND THE EMBASSY CONCURS); CARIBBEAN INDUSTRIAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE --CARIRI (UNIDO); ANIMAL

HEALTH ASSISTANTS CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT (WHO); INSTRUCTOR TRAINING -WATER SUPPLIES AND SEWERAGE (WHO); AND TOOL AND DIE PRODUCTION (UNIDO), ANOTHER MAJOR PROJECT FOR WHICH SUCCESS IS PREDICTED IS THE RECENTLY-INAUGURATED SCHOOL OF DENTAL NURSING (WHO). WEAKEST UNDP PROJECT, IN EMBASSY'S OPINION, IS THE ADMINISTRATIVE IMPROVEMENT PROPROGRAM (UNOTC), AIMED AT UP-GRADING GOVERNMENT CIVIL SERVICE PRACTICES AND ORGANIZATION. THIS PROGRAM WAS HAMPERED BY HAPHAZARD ARRIVAL OF EXPERTS, LACK OF FULL-TIME HIGH-LEVEL COUNTERPART PERSONNEL, AND AN APPARENT LAPSE IN THE GOVERNMENT'S COMMITMENT TO ATTAINMENT OF THE PROJECT'S OBJECTIVES. THIS PROJECT IS NEARLY CONCLUDED, AND AN ATTEMPT BY ONE ADVISER TO EMBARK ON A "PHASE II" HAS WISELY BEEN REJECTED.

(F) FOR THE REASONS OUTLINED IN 74 PORT OF SPAIN 732 (NOTAL) THE EMBASSY DOES NOT FEEL IT FEASIBLE OR APPROPRIATE TO ATTEMPT TO REVIEW PROPOSED UNDP PROJECTS.

(G) UNESCO ACTIVITIES IN TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO HAVE INCLUDED A NUMBER OF EVENTS EMPHASIZING ROLE OF WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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FACT THAT NEW UNDP RESREP IS A WOMAN MAY ALSO DRAW MORE ATTENTION TO CONCEPT OF FULL EQUALITY OF WOMEN IN THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS, ALTHOUGH SPECIFIC UNDP PROJECTS NOW UNDERWAY IN TRINIDAD DO NOT DISPAY ANY SUCH ORIENTATION. (DENTAL NURSING SCHOOL IS AN ARGUABLE EXCEPTION, SINCE MAJORITY OF ITS STUDENTS ARE WOMEN, BUT THEY ARE BEING TRAINED FOR WHAT IS TRADITIONALLY A "WOMAN'S JOB".) RICH

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